

BOYS OF THE STREET
How to Win Them



**CHARLES
STELZLE**



Class HV 878

Book .S 8

Copyright N^o

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

BOYS *of the* STREET
HOW TO WIN THEM

12 MO.

CLOTH

75c. NET

THE WORKINGMAN AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

By CHARLES STELZLE

It wins the reader's confidence by its grasp of actual conditions, and corrects many misconceptions.
—*Congregationalist*.

This work is the outcome of: first, several years as a workingman; second, a series of circular letters to labor leaders; third, practical work among workingmen, settlement and city mission work.—*Chicago Record-Herald*.

Clergymen, settlement workers, church members, laboring men, in fact every one who is interested in the workingman and social problems will enjoy reading this book.—*New York Observer*.

Mr. Stelzle was a real workingman and knows the feeling and aspirations of the wage-workers. He is fair, honest, and a keen observer.—*The Standard*.

Mr. Stelzle has an intelligent appreciation and sympathy for these work-people of all grades. "The common people, the toilers, the men of uncommon sense,—to these we owe a debt of gratitude." And those who wish really to help these multitudes of men and women "of uncommon sense" will find herein many admirable suggestions.—*The Examiner*.

BOYS *of the* STREET

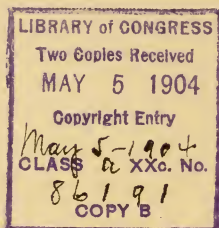
How to Win Them

By
CHARLES STELZLE
Author of
The Workingman and Social Problems



NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO
Fleming H. Revell Company
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

Copyright, 1904, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY



New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 63 Washington Street
Toronto: 27 Richmond Street, W
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 30 St. Mary Street

“ It is by the Boys' Club that the street is hardest hit. In the fight for the lad it is that which knocks out the ‘gang,’ and with its own weapon—the weapon of organization.”

—JACOB A. RIIS.

PREFACE

I WAS number "8" in the now famous St. Mark's Boys' Club of New York City—the first boys' club started in America. That was over twenty years ago. Since then I have conducted a number of clubs of my own. My first attempt was with a mass club which had a membership of over five hundred, and which was composed principally of newsboys and bootblacks. This was followed, in another city, by a group club which was limited to eight members. During the past five years my interest in boys' work has been centred in self-government clubs.

The material in this book is the result of this varied experience. Abstract theories have been avoided. Nothing is suggested but what has been actually tested and found helpful, either by myself or by some other practical worker.

The book is founded upon a series of

articles written by the author for the *Sunday-School Times* and an article printed more recently in the *Outlook*. I gratefully acknowledge the permission given by the editors of these papers to use the matter which has been incorporated into this book.

CHARLES STELZLE.

Evanston, Ill.

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	WHY BOYS' WORK IS NEEDED - -	11
II.	THE OBJECT OF THE WORK - -	20
III.	VARIOUS KINDS OF CLUBS - - -	25
IV.	SOME THINGS THAT A CLUB MAY DO -	37
V.	A BOYS' CLUB CONSTITUTION - -	46
VI.	THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE CLUB -	53
VII.	RELIGION IN THE CLUB - - -	59
VIII.	THE CLUBS' "ESPRIT DE CORPS" -	74
IX.	CLUB MANAGERS - - -	80
X.	SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS - -	88

I

WHY BOYS' WORK IS NEEDED

"I'm always a-movin' on, sir. I've always been a-movin' on, sir, ever since I was born. Where can I move to, sir, more nor I do move?"

That half-defiant, half-pitiful cry of poor Joe, the street waif, in Dickens's "Bleak House," in response to the policeman's command to "move on," is a cry which is not confined to London nor to Dickens's time. It is heard in many American cities. Every member of a boys' club which was composed of the fellows in one of my Bible classes, had, with one exception, spent at least one night in the police station before joining the club, guilty of no greater crime than that he had no more convenient place to meet his friends than upon the street corner or in front of his own home.

Whether the police station is a better place for our boys than the street corner is a question which our municipal authorities have

apparently decided for us, but whether we agree with them or not, it is likely that we will unanimously decide—and I think that the policeman will agree with us—that there should be better places for city boys than the police station.

One night a city paper announced that a boy had committed suicide in a drunken spree. He was about eighteen years of age and unknown, and it was said that if any mother had such a boy as was described she might find her boy at the morgue. Two hundred mothers went to look at that face. Was not that an awful commentary?

A visit to any one of our penitentiaries will reveal the fact that the great majority of its inmates are young men. As one goes through the corridors and work-shops of the great institution, and thinks of the lost opportunities represented in the wrecked manhood of the prisoners, it seems as though the sad words "it might have been," are written upon the forehead of every criminal.

But the time when "it might have been" was back in the boyhood days of the man who is now hardened in crime. If he had had a friend to advise and help when he was beset by the temptations of city life, he might

now be found occupying a position of honour instead of wearing the prisoner's stripes.

The home no longer influences the average boy as it did in the days when society had fewer claims upon us, and the problem of what is to become of the boys without parental oversight and training is serious enough in the refined home. But what can we say for the boy who has no place that is a real home, but simply a lodge where he spends the night?

There are thousands of boys in our cities whose homes consist of only one or two small rooms in a tenement house, sometimes back of a dark, dingy alley. These conditions in our crowded tenements have more to do with crime and immorality than will ever be known this side of the judgment day. Eighteen persons living in three rooms, twelve of them being adults, are not calculated to stimulate high ideals in the mind of the average boy.

The boy in such a home rarely has the sympathy of his father. At any rate, his father is not always the help that he should be. If the boy should happen to lose his "job," sometimes through no fault of his own, and be unable to secure another, the

epithet "loafer" will frequently drive him out of his home, and, if he was not a loafer before he lost his job, he is in a fair way to become one now. Few of us are aware of the large number of young men who board outside of their own homes, even when their parents live in the same city.

The boy in the city usually starts to work at fourteen. If he is large and strong for his age, he goes to the factory just as soon as he can pass for that age. His evenings are now open to him, since he has no school lessons to prepare. He has more money to spend than he ever had before. His circle of acquaintances is enlarged, and, ordinarily, it includes some young fellow who has seen something of the shady side of city life. Going about town with him, and seeing its gay life, he begins to compare it with his own monotonous existence, and it is a question of only a short time, usually, when the slender tie that binds him to his humble home is broken, and he falls into the clutches of the manager of the cheap theatre, the saloon keeper, and the keeper of the down-town dive.

And then, too, the candy store and the tobacco shop will welcome him, especially if he wants to organize a club. I sometimes

marvel at the apparent coldness of some of our churches in disapproving of an organization of some kind for their boys, as though they were aliens of a dangerous type, who needed to be suspiciously watched, until the average boy comes to believe that he is an Ishmael, against whom every man's hand is turned.

In most of our cities, our boys are attracted by the small halls which may be found in the poorer parts of the town, where they advertise "Dancing to-night at eight o'clock," or a "Soiree on Sunday night; Gentlemen twenty-five cents; Ladies free." Or else they are tempted to join a social club which meets back of a saloon because there is no rent to pay, on the condition that the members of the club will treat. The chief function of the social club is to "run" a ball, and attend the balls conducted by other social clubs, each striving to outdo the rest in the gorgeousness of the badges worn by the floor-manager and his assistants, or in the prizes offered to the best dancer, or the most elegantly dressed couple, the badges and prizes being displayed for several weeks previous to the ball, in a favoured store window.

Most of these social clubs are a positive

curse to the boy who has become associated with their members. The rooms are open every night, and the new boys learn more of sin in a single evening, by sitting about the table and listening to the coarse and immoral stories which are being told, than he will forget in a lifetime. There is absolutely no effort made to improve the mind. The young men simply gather at their headquarters to spend the time in idle talk, coarse singing, card-playing, and "canning" beer. Of all the institutions in our large cities which are sending the boys down to destruction, this is not the least.

A young member, in telling about what was done at one of these clubs, said: "They have kissing all through pleasure time, and use slang language, and they don't behave nice between young ladies."

It is unfortunate that the poor boy, even when he would do right, must go to some cheap "variety show" if he would spend an evening of relaxation after a hard day's work in the shop, because, in most instances, there is no other place to which he could go where he would secure that diversion which he needs. If he has a love for music, he cannot indulge that most elevating taste,

unless he can afford to spend as much for the concert as he has earned in a whole day. The only alternative is to resort to the vaudeville, where he may hear fairly good music, but where he must take with it so much of evil that the good is usually more than over-balanced. Where else could he go in the average city if he would see the "moving pictures" which have become so popular?

It may be well enough to make the statement that any boy with push and ambition will find useful employment during the evening, but we must remember that not all boys have this push, and that the great majority are only ordinary boys, and will be only ordinary men. But if they are to be only ordinary men, we ought to help them so that they may at least become good men.

It is difficult to make a boy realize his unconscious needs, when he is constantly reminded of his conscious wants. But when you open one door to enjoyment and healthy pleasure, you have closed a dozen avenues to sin and shame.

Jacob Riis once said: "It is by the boys' club that the street is hardest hit. In the fight for the lad, it is that which knocks out the 'gang,' and with its own weapon—the

weapon of organization." Boys are naturally fond of organization and discipline. This has been demonstrated in the work of the Boys' Brigade. The late Henry Drummond applied this truth to the movement in his own country. "Amazing and preposterous illusion!" he declared. "Call these boys, *boys*, which they are, and ask them to sit up in a Sunday class, and no power on earth will make them do it. Put a five-penny cap on them and call them soldiers, which they are not, and you can order them about until midnight."

It is quite a common thing to establish rescue missions for the street boy when he has become a man, when it might have been a comparatively easy task to save his life as well as his soul twenty years before. And if he cannot tell the harrowing story of a ruined life, it will not take away the power of his testimony, neither will it mar his influence as a citizen, nor make him less of a father or a worker in his life's occupation.

Boys' work is cheap, even though it cost ten times as much as is required to conduct the average rescue mission, but it is safe to say that not one-tenth as much money is spent for that class of boys outside the Sun-

day-school and similar organizations which are *not* reaching the street boy, as is put into rescue mission work, which aims to reach him when it is almost too late. The work is infinitely cheaper, on the theory that prevention is better than cure, even though it may not show up so well in an annual report.

II

THE OBJECT OF THE WORK

THERE is perhaps no form of social work which may be more easily inaugurated than a boys' club, but experience has taught us that it is not always the least difficult to maintain.

Any one can open a reading-room, and allow the boys to flock in. But this does not mean a boys' club; it usually means a rabble, and ends in a row. The almost inevitable result will be that your club-room will become the plotting-place for a gang of boys who will soon become a nuisance in the neighbourhood, and your unfeeling fellow-citizens will present you with a petition asking that your philanthropic enterprise be discontinued.

A boys' club will surely fail in doing its best work unless there is a definite plan in the mind of the manager with regard to the whole enterprise, and a definite purpose in every entertainment or meeting held. Be-

fore inviting a boy to meet you for the purpose of organizing a club, it should be very clearly settled in your own mind as to what shall be the foundation and purpose of the club. The matter of determining as to just how this purpose shall be carried out is quite another thing. One cannot settle that in the beginning. The club worker will never cease thinking about and planning for it. Sometimes one will get help from the boys themselves in determining one's plans. However, the boys will indicate their need—which is, of course, the factor in planning for the object of the club—quite unconsciously.

It is a mistake to confine oneself to purely negative work. Keeping the boys off the streets may be a good thing. Putting something into their hearts and minds which will be helpful is far better.

The most prominent feature in many boys' clubs is the social element. In fact, some managers have attempted to carry on their work upon this basis alone, and they have found, invariably, that the boys could not be held permanently unless something besides games and socials were provided. It is true that in some crowded neighbourhoods an

interest has been maintained in this way, so that the membership has seemed to grow to almost incredible proportions; but it would be found, upon investigation, that the great majority had simply "passed through" the club, making room for the hundreds, and sometimes the thousands, who followed.

Some club managers go to the other extreme: they strive to build up a great educational institution, rivalling the evening and the technical schools in curriculum and general management. This is also a mistake. While it is an excellent plan to establish an educational institution for boys, the manager of the boys' club who attempts it is departing from the original design of boys' club work, and is entering a field which is clearly out of his province. The boys' club is not an evening school, and the time and energy of the manager might better be directed into other channels, because he will find that the work which is already being done in the evening school is far superior to that which he can possibly do.

Work in a boys' club should be largely inspirational. It should have for its supreme purpose the building up of character. And the simpler the machinery, the more effective

will be the work. Not that classes may not be maintained with profit. But the real benefit from the classes will result from the personality of the leader or teacher, rather than from the technical knowledge which may be obtained from a particular study.

The class work will be a point of contact. The common interest in a certain subject or industry will give the leader an opportunity to direct the boy to better and higher things. When the boy is ready for a regular course in the evening school, the club will have largely accomplished its purpose for that particular boy, for he will have little use for the club after that.

The earnest workers who are so fearful lest their efforts in behalf of the boys will be worse than useless unless they can get the boys to apply themselves to some specific study, should not forget that education and discipline and character may be acquired in the gymnasium or in the game, as well as in the class-room. Fair play and cooperation, which are demanded in these things, will work wonders in the average boy's character. It is because the boy is indifferent to these things that he needs to be helped—not thrown overboard to perish because he is not

pleased to apply his mind consecutively,—about which, by the way, some of us who are older are not particularly anxious.

Whatever is suggestive of a sweeter and a stronger home life should be here introduced, because it must not be forgotten that, after all, one of the chief purposes of the club is to develop that love for home which for many reasons may have been eradicated. If this can be accomplished, the boys' club will have fulfilled a great mission.

III

VARIOUS KINDS OF CLUBS

IN a general way one may say that there are three kinds of clubs—the group club, the mass club, and the self-government club. Then there is what has been called the combination club, which includes two or more features which are found in the clubs just mentioned.

The first boys' clubs to be organized were mass clubs. They were organized, primarily, for the purpose of keeping boys off the streets, and were necessarily somewhat crude in some things. With the growth of the boys' club idea there has been a radical change in the plan of organization. Instead of there being a great company of boys, meeting nightly for the purpose of reading and playing games, with an occasional entertainment, leaders have started the group club, which is usually confined to from six to ten boys. These boys are generally made up of the same "gang," therefore of the same age and the same neighbourhood.

The group club will usually meet only once a week, and is under the immediate direction of a leader who is responsible for the work of the club.

Unquestionably, there are decided advantages in limiting the size of the club, so that there will be that personal touch with the leader which cannot always be secured in a club which numbers several hundred. One of the very best clubs ever organized is composed of a Sunday-school teacher and her class of boys. The teacher will find no better way to hold her boys if she can meet her scholars in this way during the week. It is important in a group club to get together boys who are congenial. In form, the club is very simple, but its very simplicity gives such a club a wide range of possibility. A group club has about it a great deal of elasticity. The plans may be more easily changed than is often possible in a larger club. Usually, the group club has a common interest in some subject, the subject being determined almost altogether by the ability or the talents of the leader. What this interest may be does not really matter, so long as it may be made helpful, and prove to be a point of contact. Some of the things suggested in

the chapter on "What a Boys' Club May Do," will be helpful in deciding as to what a group club may make its specialty.

Since the group club has so little machinery, it depends very much upon the leader for its success; much more so than does the mass club. The leader of such a group must know intimately every boy. His must be a strong, sympathetic nature. A club of this kind offers a great moral opportunity to such a person.

Mr. Alvan F. Sanborn, in the *South End House Bulletin*, tells of his experience with a group club. He writes: "I gave myself conscientiously to amusing a group of boys with table games for several months before I discovered them to be worthy of much better things. Then the discovery came by the merest accident. The boys were twelve and thirteen years of age. There were seven of them, and they came to my room once a week. Their ignorance of the commonest facts of country life (I have heard a squirrel called a young monkey) led me one night to show them a dusty natural history collection I had made when a very small boy. Instantly it was to them as if they were in a fairy palace. The specimens,—mainly insects and birds' eggs—were battered, worm-

eaten, and discoloured; but my boys' eyes were full of wonder, and reverence was in the touch of their hands. They were stirred with a new enthusiasm that boded much good. I saw that I should have to rack my brains no more for amusements; that our meetings were at last to answer a real purpose.

"The collection alone, petty as it was, held the attention of the boys for several nights. Then, as it was winter, I tried to tide the precious interest over to spring by planting seeds in sawdust and sand, and getting them to do the same. Early in March I was able to show tree buds and catkins as trophies of walks in the country, and a little later, live frogs, turtles and snakes. As soon as bird-nesting time arrived, it was easy to make a striking display every week. On occasional Saturdays I took the boys into the country and there they became infected with the egg-collecting fever.

"I love Thoreau and I love Burroughs and all the rest of the outdoor fraternity. I longed to share my pleasure in them with the boys, but lacked the moral courage to make so risky an experiment. Finally, I remembered the charming bird biographies of Olive Thorn Miller, and ventured on them.

It was a happy venture. This so far emboldened me that I read them, in quick succession, parts of Bradford Torrey, Bolles, Abbot, Burroughs, and even Thoreau. Of these, Burroughs, I think, was the favourite. That the finer shades of thought or the strictly literary qualities of these writings were apparent to the boys, I do not for a moment affirm. Of course I had to choose chapters wisely, and avoid altogether or simplify ideas which were taken in and the fresh out-of-door flavour was appreciated.

“This past summer, the study and collecting have gone on very much as in the year before, except that the nature-love is now ‘inside the skin.’ This it is that makes me glad. The boys no longer wait for me to take the initiative. They take electric-car rides into the country by themselves, when they can raise dimes. When there are no dimes they walk out through dismal city streets to such country as is to be found at the end of two or three miles—tame enough, as most of us know.

“Those of us who have faith that no good influence, however weak, is vain, as well as those of us who are Wordsworthians enough to believe in the special ethical value of a love

of nature, will feel it is really no small thing for the child of a crowded city neighbourhood to grow to manhood with such a love within his soul. 'Nature never did betray the heart that loved her.' In these hours of rollicking country research are life and food for future years."

While much may be said in favour of the group club, there are some advantages in the larger or mass club which are ordinarily lost to the smaller club. Chief among them is the fact that the club is reaching a greater number of boys. It is quite likely that at least six boys out of the larger club will receive as much benefit as the six boys who would compose a club of that number, although the benefit may be of a different kind, besides helping the larger number who would otherwise have been left out.

A large club tends to break down some of the barriers of creed, race and colour. It is, as a rule, more democratic than the smaller club. The club spirit is stronger, and the enthusiasm more lasting among average boys, and these are the kind that you will deal with. Your model boy rarely needs the boys' club.

Contact with a large number of bright, wide-awake boys is bound to stimulate a

duller boy. The large club is richer in traditions. There are the achievements of the baseball nine or the football team, the glee-club or the orchestra, the memories of the picnics and the summer camp. Then there are the lessons of brotherhood and cooperation, which can be taught more effectively in the larger club.

The mass club is economical. The same argument would hold good for a large club that holds for a large church or business. As a rule, its affairs are administered better because it is directed by a committee or board which contains men of large experience and sympathy. The club, however, must have a head with undivided responsibility. This kind of a club will reach the neediest boys, because they will be more likely to go where there is a crowd, than to a place where they might be more closely scrutinized as to the clothes that they can afford to wear. As a rule, the expense of belonging to a group club is larger than that of a mass club, because there are usually some boys in the group club who will insist on excursions or some other features which may cost more than the poor boy can afford. This, of course, may be prevented with a wise leader.

Any boy should be eligible to membership in a mass club, and he should be retained until he very clearly proves himself unfit for the association of other boys. Even then he should have the personal care of the manager, because just then he will need it most. It is customary to have the rooms open every night for the mass club. There should be a number of assistants who may be depended upon, each having his work mapped out, as indicated in another chapter. It will cost more to conduct a mass club, but it will be easier to raise money for it than for the smaller club. Indeed, there are few things that appeal to the average citizen more readily than boys' club work. The people who contribute largely to mission and church work are confined to a comparatively small circle. There is a large company of people who are not contributing towards regular mission work who could be induced to give towards the work of a boys' club.

It has been said that it is impossible for a club manager to become acquainted with a large number of boys in the mass club. That is true, but it should be remembered that the boys become acquainted with him.

When it has been decided to have a club

which is to take in as many boys as the rooms will accommodate, it is best to limit the membership in the beginning, so that the manager may become acquainted with the boys who are to be largely responsible for the future of the club, the limit being increased from time to time, until the full number has been reached. This plan places a premium upon the membership, giving it a value which it might not otherwise possess.

A combination of the mass club and the group club makes the best form of organization, in the city. This is the plan which is being rapidly introduced in many of the larger clubs, some of which have not been getting the results which they might have. This form has been arrived at from the other end in some churches and settlements, where the group club was the beginning of the club idea. After a number of clubs have been started, they have been federated. The plan is more easily arranged when this has been the case, and in some ways is more satisfactory than the formation of small groups selected from a large company of boys, because the natural selection has in most cases been already made in the group club. However, it is not at all impossible to divide the

boys into separate groups after the mass club has arrived at a large membership. The selection may be made according to age or natural interest, the latter being always the best method of selection.

In the case of the federation idea, meetings of the united clubs may be held once a week for business purposes and for games, although there should be some kind of a permanent organization, having a definite object, with its officers and general committees.

Whatever the form of organization, it should be the aim of the leader to meet the boys as often as possible, and in a crowded city, where there are so many temptations alluring the boy into sin, some provision should be made for the nightly care of the boys of the community. For this purpose, the mass club, with its reading and game rooms, besides the occasional entertainments and talks, seems to meet the greatest need.

It is well to give the boys some part in the management of the club. This gives them a personal responsibility, and they will naturally take a great deal of pride in maintaining a high standard for the club. Probably the best way to maintain order is to take the

ring-leader in the capers of the boys, and give him the authority of a policeman in the club-rooms. He will then be just as enthusiastic in keeping order as he was before in leading the boys into mischief.

The self-government club is, in many respects, the ideal club. A model constitution for this kind of a club may be found in the chapter on "A Boys' Club Constitution." The boys elect their own officers, appoint their own committees, and become responsible for the business of the club in every particular.

The manager of the club is appealed to only when a question becomes too complex for their settlement. A wise manager will sometimes permit the boys to make a mistake, so that they may profit through the experience. The members of the self-government club should be taught to appreciate the fact that the success of the club depends upon their own efforts. The committees should know that they are expected to do the work that has been assigned to them, and not to depend upon the manager for the execution of the will of the club.

All this develops a spirit of self-reliance, and it cultivates the habit of right thinking,

because the boys very readily see the result of wrong action taken by the club.

The question of discipline may usually be left in the hands of the boys, since most boys have a keen sense of justice, and will stand up for that which is right and fair, and discipline administered by the boys will ordinarily be far more effective than if it came from the manager, while at the same time the manager may still be regarded as the friend of the offender. Permanent expulsion from the club should rarely be resorted to as a means of discipline. One needs to distinguish between the exuberant life of boy nature and downright viciousness.

Ordinarily, the clubs which are composed of boys who are never guilty of any of the pranks which are peculiar to boys are very slow affairs, and they rarely turn out a good, live "hustler." This, of course, does not necessarily follow. It is simply a matter of general observation, and should be an encouragement to the worker who thinks that his boys are unusually "bad."

IV

SOME THINGS THAT A BOYS' CLUB MAY DO

It has been said that work in a boys' club should be largely inspirational. By this I do not mean that it consists only of "goody goody" talks, or even the really inspirational kind. Neither do I mean that no definite work should be attempted.

A study of street boy nature—and this kind should receive the most attention—will reveal the fact that whatever taste for quiet, consecutive work or enjoyment he may have possessed has been taken out of him by the experiences of the street. The glamour of city life has been the curse of the boy who has spent all of his life amidst the unhealthy surroundings of the cheap theatre, the saloon, the dance hall, or even the unusual excitement of the busy street. He now feeds upon this excitement, and it is with the utmost difficulty that he can be brought to think about matters which are more refined.

To take a group of such boys and suddenly plunge them into a course of study which requires hard, consecutive thinking will drive them away at once. We should never forget that we have to do, not with the ideal boy, but with the careless, happy-go-lucky average boy, who left school, or hates it, because he had to study, sometimes under very unfavourable circumstances, when he went there.

How to get him to think seriously and continuously is the problem that will confront the club manager. The boy loves power. Show him that he can obtain it through knowledge. He loves praise. Teach him how he may deserve it. He has energy enough to accomplish wonders if it can be rightly directed. Now, if we can find some form of education which will engage this power, we shall have solved the problem, and the boy will be on the way towards higher and better things. Boys like to make things. Teach them the dignity of labour. Most of them will be mechanics. Show them how they may become the best mechanics. It may be a very simple thing, sometimes; a mere suggestion, given at the right moment, will put a great new idea into the boy's mind which will completely change his career. For this

Some Things That a Club May Do 39

occasion the manager must be always on the lookout. The plans which follow are merely suggestive, for no one can outline the work which may be introduced into every boys' club. Each manager must work out his own salvation, even though it is sometimes done with fear and trembling.

It has been found an excellent thing to introduce the kindergarten idea into some boys' clubs. This will require considerable thought, and may even mean the employment of a special teacher. For the smaller boys this will prove to be interesting and helpful, for you will find that few of them ever so much as heard of a kindergarten.

As boys grow older they become interested in politics. City politics are especially fascinating, because the boys early take an active interest in them. For such, city history clubs may be made profitable. Study the beginning of the city's life, its early landmarks, its development, its industries, the various departments of municipal government, the administration of public utilities, etc. Anything that has to do with the life of the city may be investigated by such a club.

In some clubs miniature elections are held, with all the paraphernalia of the regular elec-

tion system. Speeches are made for the candidates, and as much liberty as possible is given to the orators. The various parties appoint campaign committees and call mass meetings. Boy poll clerks, inspectors and watchers at the polls, are appointed, and on election night the regular customs are followed, the Australian ballot being used.

Most boys are fond of music. A glee club is always popular, and instrumental music will interest many. A Penny Provident Bank will inculcate habits of saving, besides teaching many other valuable lessons. A successful club manager says with regard to this phase of the work: "I consider the savings bank one of the best features of boys' club work. It is a practical businesslike way of teaching lessons of thrift and economy. The bank once successfully introduced advertises itself. Boys are persuaded to become depositors because they see the bank-books owned by their companions and are anxious to possess one themselves. To own a bank account, even if the deposits are counted by pennies, means much to the average boy. Then the growing amounts, the rapid way that pennies increase, is often a genuine surprise to boys who little realized that the few

Some Things That a Club May Do 41

pennies spent here and there for candy and cigarettes soon amounted to dollars. No millionaire ever counted over his riches with more satisfaction than some youngsters display as they show their first dollar saved. I have always encouraged in my club the idea of saving for some definite object—a pair of shoes, an overcoat, a suit of clothes, even a bicycle—anything a boy can look forward to buying with his own money. Boys, even the poorer ones, frequently have more money than at first seems possible. Nearly every street boy picks up a good many pennies selling papers, blacking shoes or running errands. If he is at all ambitious the sum may amount to considerable. Many of them carry their earnings home, but nearly every one has something for himself, and when they begin the habit of saving the little amounts they soon appreciate the value of even a penny.”

We once had about two thousand depositors, who saved over \$6,000. The parents and sisters of the members should be encouraged to become depositors, as they were in this case. A complete banking outfit may be secured from the Penny Provident Fund of New York City without any charge excepting for the postage.

If possible, a boys' club should have a circulating library. It should be first-class, even though there are no more than a dozen volumes. Travelling libraries, with a few games enclosed, have proved to be helpful in the homes. A picture loaning library might also be beneficial.

Debating societies are frequently organized among the boys from fourteen to eighteen, and it almost takes one's breath away to see the rapidity with which they discuss and dismiss matters of world-wide interest and importance. But the practice in debate and the knowledge of parliamentary law which is acquired, is always helpful to the boys, many of whom will some day debate in real life, when there will be real issues at stake.

Many of the members of the clubs are newsboys. Why not have the boys print a small newspaper? There are few things which will prove to be more fascinating, even to those who do not sell papers.

In some cities Junior Leagues of the Department of Street Cleaning have been encouraged, cooperating with the street department in keeping the streets clean by compelling an observance of the city ordinances. Nature-study classes are some-

Some Things That a Club May Do 43

times full of interest, as has already been noted. The study of heroes will be found inspiring, and the love of animals will instil nobility of soul.

Lectures or talks on the care of the body, the development of the sciences, the conduct of great business enterprises, such as the daily newspaper, the department store, the railroad, or the stock exchange, are always helpful, if presented in a manner which will appeal to the average boy. Some time ago we arranged for a course of addresses in our boys' club which became so attractive that the boys were glad to extend an invitation to their boy friends, who seemed eager to attend.

The editor of the newspaper sold by the boys came down to tell us how a newspaper is made. A college professor talked on "Habits." A surgeon told, simply, of the progress of his art. A factory superintendent told the boys just what characteristics were most appreciated by him in his employees, and as many of the boys expected to work in his factory, he was listened to with keenest interest. Experience has indicated that public talks on social purity are often suggestive of the very things which they are

supposed to put out of the boys' mind, and that more harm than good usually results from such addresses.

Some clubs assume a military form. Others are organized for temperance work. And then there are the clubs similar to the "lend-a-hand" idea, which are organized for purposes of helpfulness to others.

The following familiar entertainments are always appreciated: "Talking" machines, lantern picture-talks, "Tricks" by a professional magician, ventriloquism, plays and dialogues, musical entertainments—vocal or instrumental, athletic exhibitions, reading and recitations, "Fire-Sides" with stories, historical impersonations and tableaux, shadow pictures, mock trials, experiments in chemistry and electricity, spelling matches, and informal talks on the biographies of self-made men. Other public entertainments will readily suggest themselves. Excursions to factories, public buildings, museums, parks, historical places, and outings on Saturday afternoons or some other convenient time will bring the leader into closer touch with the boys, besides being helpful to them in many ways.

The following games may be suggestive

Some Things That a Club May Do 45

for use in the club: Crokinole, dominoes, basket-ball, hand-ball, chess, authors, tid-dledy winks, shuffle board, "Nellie Bly," bean bag, spring rifle with rubber tip on point of projectile, going to Jerusalem, post-office, beast bird or fish, stage coach, lotto, table tennis, pillow dex, piece puzzles, button button, charades, blind man's buff, donkey, blow the feather, spin the platter, scout, potato race, quoits.

If manual training is desired, some of the following occupations will help: Mechanical or free hand drawing, cobbling, Venetian ironwork, basket weaving, bamboo work, bead work, box making, clay modeling, sloyd, china painting, cooking, wood-carving, whittling, scrap-book making, poster work, printing, passe-partout, fretwork, leather work, lettering, rope mat making, toy furniture making, cabinet making, carpentering, bookbinding and burnt woodwork.

V

A BOYS' CLUB CONSTITUTION

THE constitution to be adopted will depend upon the kind of a club that is to be organized. Four kinds of clubs are dealt with in this book—mass, group, combination and self-government clubs.

The mass club is usually run on tradition, although there are generally a few well understood "rules" which are necessary for the highest good of the whole number. One of the best mass clubs that I know about has the briefest kind of a constitution, namely: "Be a gentleman." The most elaborate constitution ever framed cannot do this for the members of the club, and it is admitted that the making of a gentleman is one of the chief things sought for in the club.

The group club does not require a very elaborate constitution, because there isn't very much of parliamentary law in connection with the club. It is rather a familiar group under a leader who has the confidence of the club to such a degree that his wish usually becomes the law for the club.

As the combination club is what the name implies—a combination of the mass and the

group clubs, it follows that what applies to these clubs with regard to a constitution, would also apply to it.

The self-government club, however, requires more elaborate treatment in this respect, as the boys will need frequent guidance in their deliberations, and the rules upon which their organization is built must be clearly defined. When a constitution is desired for the other kinds of clubs mentioned, sufficient will be found in the constitution given for the self-government club to draft a set of rules which will serve as a guide or a foundation.

It should be remembered that, after all, a constitution is the expression of the desires of the members of the club. It is not a policeman's baton to be held over their heads. This expression may be very brief, and yet it may comprehend all that makes up a good club.

It is not the constitution that makes the club, but the club that makes the constitution. To paraphrase a familiar expression: "The constitution follows the club." The following constitution may have to be adapted as well as adopted. It is given simply as a general guide to those who will readily see just what is needed for their particular club.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

Name.

This organization shall be called The Young American Club.

ARTICLE II.

Object.

The object of the club shall be to develop the physical, mental, and moral natures of its members.

ARTICLE III.

Colours.

The colours of the club shall be red and blue.

ARTICLE IV.

Membership.

Section 1. Any boy between the ages of ten and fourteen may become a member of the club, upon the recommendation of the membership committee, and upon a majority vote of the club.

Section 2. Each boy, before being admitted to the privileges of the club, shall sign the constitution, after his election.

Section 3. Any boy who is absent from four consecutive meetings will have his name taken from the membership roll, unless he

has a good reason for his absence, which must be sent to the Secretary in writing.

ARTICLE V.

Officers.

Section 1. There shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Chaplain.

Section 2. All elective officers shall be chosen by ballot, the persons receiving the highest number of votes being declared elected.

Section 3. The term of office shall be four months.

ARTICLE VI.

Duties of Officers.

Section 1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the club. He shall have power in case of a tie vote to cast the deciding vote.

Section 2. The Vice-President shall preside at all meetings of the club in the absence of the President, and shall assist the President in all ways possible.

Section 3. The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all proceedings of the club. He shall keep a list of the names and residences of all the members, and call the roll at each meeting.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall keep a correct account of all money received by him, and shall collect all dues from the members, and give a weekly report showing the financial condition of the club.

Section 5. The Chaplain shall be responsible for such religious exercises as may be determined upon by the club.

ARTICLE VII.

Committees.

Section 1. The following named standing committees shall be appointed for each term by the President, after consulting with the Executive Committee.

(a) *Membership.*—It shall be the duty of this committee to propose desirable candidates for membership in the club, and to visit and report upon all absentees.

(b) *Rooms.*—It shall be the duty of this committee to see that the club-rooms are properly heated, lighted and ventilated, and that all furniture is in its proper place before and after the meeting. It shall also be the duty of this committee to see that order is maintained in and about the building.

(c) *Social.*—It shall be the duty of this committee to arrange for and take charge of

the socials given by the club, securing such assistance as they may need.

(d) *Educational*.—It shall be the duty of this committee to secure speakers for the regular meetings of the club, to take charge of all work of a literary character, and to arrange for all public meetings not otherwise provided for.

(e) *Athletic*.—It shall be the duty of this committee to organize teams for outdoor games, and to have supervision over the paraphernalia in the gymnasium.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall consist of the elective officers.

Section 3. Special committees may be appointed by the President upon the recommendation of the club.

Section 4. The manager of the club shall be ex-officio member of all committees.

ARTICLE VIII.

Misbehaviour.

Any boy misbehaving at a meeting of the club or about the building, shall be tried before the club by a committee appointed for that purpose, the club determining the punishment which shall be inflicted.

ARTICLE IX.

Dues.

Dues shall be one cent a week, payable weekly.

ARTICLE X.

Meetings.

Section 1. The club shall hold its regular meetings on every Tuesday night at seven o'clock.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the Executive Committee, or upon the written request of three members.

Section 3. The quarterly meeting of the club shall be held on the first Tuesday evenings in January, April, July and October, when there shall be an election of officers, and reports from the standing committees.

ARTICLE XI.

Quorum.

Two-thirds of the entire membership of the club shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE XII.

Amendments.

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting, notice of such amendment having been given one week in advance.

VI

THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE CLUB

THE success of any enterprise depends very largely upon the attention given to details, and what is true of other matters applies with equal force to the boys' club.

The arrangement of a room and the selection of its furnishings have much to do with holding the boys. They cannot explain why the room has an unpleasant effect, or why they become restless and drowsy, but the manager may know, if he gives the matter a little attention. A proper regard for ventilation will work a great change in the behaviour of the boys, who cannot read or continue to play games because of the impure atmosphere. The arrangement of the lights is an important consideration. A poorly lighted room is never attractive, but a glare of gas may be equally bad.

There should be plenty of carefully selected pictures, the meaning of which it may be well to explain to the boys, so that they may carry with them the lessons or the idea in the

mind of the artist. It is much better, however, to have one good picture than to fill the walls of the room with a lot of cheap chromos which may mean absolutely nothing, or suggest something worse. Good pictures are cheap enough; in fact, they may be cut out of some of our first-class magazines or art journals, and changed in the frames from time to time.

Fresh-cut flowers tastefully arranged, helpful mottoes placed upon the walls or upon the blackboard, or any little thing that may be copied and placed in their own homes, will be found helpful in training the boys to appreciate the beautiful things which God has given mankind in nature or through the talents of men.

Many new clubs are dependent upon their friends for second-hand reading matter, to be used in the club-rooms. This should be replaced as soon as possible by new and regularly published matter, which must be kept on file in an orderly manner, because the environment of the boys will have much to do with their general behaviour, and the best influence will always be exerted when the rooms are neatly kept and everything is done decently and in order.

The Headquarters of the Club 55

The games should be carefully selected, so that even in their amusements the boys may be trained to right habits of thinking. It is best to have tables in the game-room which accommodate only four boys each.

When there is a gymnasium—and this should be secured if at all possible—it should be kept as clean and orderly as circumstances will permit. It may be suggestive to some of the boys if they are reminded that their dirty hands and faces are not in harmony with their surroundings, and it would be well to have soap and water close at hand, so that they may be used when required, although it will not be long before the neatly kept room will have its influence upon the average boy.

It is best not to permit the boys to get the impression that you have an unlimited amount of money at your disposal—very few clubs have, by the way—because it will have the effect of making them reckless with the privileges which they then enjoy, and they will not appreciate what you give them so much as if they realized that the new feature cost somebody a struggle; and they will enjoy it still more if they have done the struggling themselves.

One club that I know about became interested in securing the material for a small gymnasium for their own use, and they proceeded to earn the necessary money by gathering the empty tin cans found upon the lots and in the garbage heaps in their part of the city, and selling them to a concern that paid them ten cents per hundred cans. Some of the boys earned several dollars in this way, and enough money was raised to fit up quite a respectable gymnasium.

A group club may meet in the home of the leader, and there are many advantages in this arrangement. But if it is at all possible, the club should have a room set apart for its own use, which may be decorated with the club colours and such other trophies as will inspire an "esprit de corps."

The inability to secure an ideal room should not prevent an earnest man or woman from organizing a boys' club. Almost any kind of a room in any kind of a building may be transformed into a club-room. Indeed, the more unique the room, the better it will be enjoyed.

I remember that when some of the boys with whom I associated when I was nine years old organized a club which met in the

dark cellar of a New York tenement, and when we had nothing but tallow candles to illuminate the darkness, we thought that that club-room could not be beaten.

But while it is true that other things may easily make up for the lack in certain things in the furnishings and the arrangements of a boys' club-room, other things being equal, the room that is most neatly kept, will hold boys longest, and do them the most permanent good.

In some instances schoolhouses have been opened for the use of boys' clubs. There is no reason why this may not be done more generally throughout the country, especially in the great cities, where social centres for the people are so much needed. It would seem that any reputable person should be able to secure the use of a schoolroom for boys' club meetings, upon the payment of a small fee.

Social settlements, are, of course, recognized as centres for special boys' work, group clubs receiving particular attention. The average settlement will always welcome the club which desires to make its building the headquarters of the club. This privilege is often secured by helping to pay for the

care of the room. There is no doubt that the best group clubs are found in the settlements, largely because the workers are experts, and because they go at the work in a businesslike way.

But, more and more are the churches becoming community centres. The rooms in the average church are more conveniently arranged than the schoolroom for boys' club work, and it should not be difficult to secure the permission of an official church board to use one of these rooms for a club composed of the boys in the neighbourhood.

Some boys' clubs throughout the country have been so greatly prospered and so richly blessed that they have been permitted to erect buildings which are being used exclusively for boys' club work. Such a building, is, of course, ideal, and many more of them should be erected in our American cities.

VII

RELIGION IN THE CLUB

THE question of attempting any direct religious work in the club has been variously decided. When the club is composed of the members of a Sunday-school class, as many good clubs are, this question is not very perplexing, as the boys receive religious training in the school. But when one is working with mass clubs in neighbourhoods which are not being reached religiously, and where the members of the club are not Sunday-school attendants, it is quite another matter.

Many club managers think it unwise to introduce religion into the club because of the large Roman Catholic and Hebrew element represented among the club members, or because they fear that it will have the effect of driving away the boy, who, apparently, cares nothing for religious teaching.

If, however, the club is connected with a church organization, and if it was organized

for the purpose of winning the boys for Christ, there seems to be but one thing to do—win them. How this is to be accomplished, will depend upon the wisdom of the manager. It may be best, for various reasons, never to have an open religious meeting, but rather to do personal work among the boys when the opportunity offers.

In a certain Sunday-school there are more boys than girls, most of the boys having been drawn into the school through the boys' club connected with the church, although there has never been a public invitation given in the club-rooms, neither has there ever been a religious meeting held especially for the members of the club.

However, prejudice against religious teaching is not nearly so prevalent among boys as is generally supposed, because it has been found that boys can be interested in the gospel of Christ, and that it is the power of God unto salvation even for the wild street arab,—although, of course, it requires a leader who has some knowledge of boy nature, and who can present the gospel in such a way that it will attract him.

It is a well-known fact that boys between the ages of ten and fifteen are more inter-

ested in religious matters than they are at any other period in their lives. It seems a pity that so few workers possess the sense or the tact to give the boys the best thing that will ever come to them, at a time when it will be most readily received.

The claim that a denominational club will drive the boys away is not well founded, because even the Jew and the Roman Catholic will come to the Protestant club so long as it continues to prove attractive, although he may not come to the Sunday-school.

Sometimes, however, we are so much concerned about there being enough religion in our plans for the boy, that we forget to leave enough boy in them. "The building is sacred," some good brother will say, "and we cannot permit that which savours of the secular." According to his notion, the ideal boys' club would consist of prayer-meetings and Bible classes, with an occasional missionary talk as a treat, and, perhaps, magic lantern views of the Holy Land as a dizzy climax.

I believe that a club or a work of any kind for boys that stops short of religion fails at a most vital point. But it must not be for-

gotten that the average street boy "needs homely virtues more than spiritual graces." Much of the religious training of the Sunday-school is unnatural for the boy of a strong, virile nature. He despises cant, and he will not be a prig. Practically all the speakers at Sunday-school gatherings, in relating the conversion of Sunday-school scholars, confine themselves to "sweet, beautiful, blue-eyed, golden-haired, little girls." To the American boy, nearly everybody who has anything to do with religion is supposed to be a woman—from the kindergarten teacher to the angels in heaven. It is not to be wondered at that the presentation of that kind of a religion does not attract the street boy. He loves and worships the heroic. I believe that the reason many boys leave the Sunday-school is because the heroic and manly side of the ideal man Christ Jesus is not taught in such a way as to appeal to this side of boy-life.

Philip E. Howard, of the *Sunday-School Times*, tells the following incident:

"A crown of thorns, brought from the East, was shown from the platform of a city mission-school by the superintendent. Very little was said to aid in this visible demon-

stration of the means used in the humiliation of Jesus, but after the school session the roughest youngster in the room made his way alone to the desk.

“ ‘ Say, may I look at that ? ’ he said.

“ ‘ Yes, ’ answered the superintendent, ‘ and you may take it in your hands. ’

“ The boy rested the crown of thorns lightly on one hand and touched it here and there with the other. His mischief-breeding eyes were serious. He looked earnestly at the superintendent, and lifted the crown to the platform table.

“ ‘ Did He wear one like that ? ’ asked the boy.

“ ‘ Yes, very much like that, I think. ’

“ ‘ Well, if He wore a thing like that, I don’t wonder that He had pain. ’ And the rough little boy of the street made no mischief as he went through the crowd and out of the school that day.

“ Here was a phase of the life of Jesus that appealed to him—a waif who was known to be brutally handled at home.”

“ When I go fishing for trout, ” said Amos R. Wells, “ I do not consider what I liked for breakfast nor what I want for dinner; I consider what the trout’s mouth is watering

for. When the average teacher goes fishing for a boy, however, I fear that she bases her campaign entirely on her own likes and dislikes. She is interested in pretty little stories with lovely morals, and she takes it for granted that the boys will be interested in the same thing. She is fascinated with a volume of Mr. Meyer's noble expositions, and she jumps to the conclusion that the boys will be glad to have her read a chapter to them. She is delighted to discover the hidden symbolism of the Bible, as that Goliath typifies worldliness and David the quiet power of Christian faith, and she is entirely oblivious to the boys' concentration of interest on Goliath's armour and David's sling."

Hearing his class talk baseball one Sunday, the teacher remarked: "Boys, not any more baseball; I want to hear no more about baseball. This is the Sunday-school." If that teacher had been wise, he would have purchased a baseball guide for the current year and studied it. Anyway, he should have talked baseball with his class on that Sunday. Had he done so, he would have entered upon the study of the lesson with a bond of sympathy between himself and his class.

Valuable as the International Sunday-school lessons are in Sunday-school work, I think that we have become slaves to the system. There is no reason why the teacher or leader of a boys' class should not get as far away as possible from the ordinary Sunday-school lesson, if that seems the best thing to do, especially if his work is done in connection with a boys' club. Old Testament stories may be made intensely vivid to the street boy, and when he learns to admire and enjoy the Bible as literature, and when he finds out, as B. Paul Neuman wrote, that "faith and immortality, and the forgiveness of sin are subjects just as 'live' and almost as important, as vaccination and strikes," a long step will have been taken towards the goal of arousing a genuine and hearty interest in religion.

I remember a rollicking boy in a New York tenement who burned his face very severely on a Fourth of July. After he had sufficiently recovered to sit up, he began reading the Bible,—for want of something else. He became interested in the stories of David, and for weeks that boy read nothing but the Old Testament, as he sat in a rocker in the back yard. And he did not do it for

show, either. He read because those unfamiliar characters had suddenly become real to him—just as real as the heroes of the dime novel—and that is saying a great deal for that particular boy.

I sometimes think that we are too much afraid of innovations. In a certain Sunday-school that was surrounded by fully a hundred thousand children, the average attendance was about three hundred. In spite of every effort put forth by devoted workers the attendance could not be increased. The workers were given the liberty of holding a meeting on a week-day afternoon which was called a "Children's Hour." A children's choir of forty voices was organized, the children recited or sang solos and duets, sometimes the stereopticon was used, and the pastor always gave a ten minute address packed full of gospel,—although it was practically a children's program. But—and this was what stunned the critics—the children also sang popular street songs of the best type. They threw themselves into the singing in a way that threatened to burst something, while the staid old sexton stood near the door, shaking his head and nervously fingering his keys. They also sang hymns,

which were stencilled upon a banner, but they were not so familiar with them. They were street children—Jews, Catholics, and those of no religious faith—and had rarely, if ever, gone to Sunday-school. When the critics came to the leader and remonstrated with him because he allowed the children to sing street songs at a religious meeting, he calmly told the objectors that it was not a religious meeting, but an entertainment for the children into which he introduced religion. *They* permitted ballads to be sung at their entertainments, he said: why not permit the children to sing them at theirs? The result of the work was that there were fully twice as many present at the children's hour as there were at the Sunday-school, and it is not claiming too much to add that they received as much gospel as did the children in the Sunday-school.

But change there must be if we are to reach and hold the boy over twelve or fourteen in the so-called mission districts of our cities. If the day stands in the way of changing the program of the school and introducing features that seem out of harmony with the Sabbath, it might not be a bad plan to change the day for the meetings for this particular

class of boys: possibly operating through the boys' club.

I would not have it understood that I see no mission for the average church Sunday-school in a home church. I am now pleading for the street boy. No Sunday-school worker of any experience will claim that the average Sunday-school of to-day is making much progress in this kind of work. Indeed, our church Sunday-schools are barely holding their own, and it is becoming a serious question as to what will become of that institution, great as are its possibilities if rightly appreciated.

The Presbyterian Church has made practically no progress in the number of attendants in its Sunday-schools during the past five years. The twentieth century movement for the ingathering of a million new scholars brought in about five hundred thousand children, but it required that number to take the places of those who had meantime dropped out of the ranks. The same thing is practically true of every denomination in this country and abroad. During a recent year in a western city, 20,000 children were lost to the Sunday-schools of that city. In the same year, London

lost over 30,000, according to a printed report.

If the Sunday-school cannot hold its own among the better class of children, what may we expect when it comes to handling the problem of the street boy?

Unfortunately, when the average Sunday-school engages in boys' club work, the managers insist that the boy must attend the school if he would receive the benefits of club or reading-room, with the result that the boy will usually abandon both the school and the club, because the school rarely has a strong enough life of its own to hold him. Strange that the Sunday-school worker does not get his cue from the things that win the boy to the club! Not that the Sunday-school should introduce on Sunday the gymnasium or the checker game of the boys' club, but something of the same snap and spirit would wonderfully attract the wide-awake boy.

Neither is the Junior Endeavour Society reaching him. The average Junior Endeavour Society is made up of girls. When I asked a boy why he did not attend a Junior Rally he replied: "Oh, it's on de bum." Analyzed, his answer meant that there was

only one boy in the society with which he was to go. The average boy of the age with which we are dealing is not attracted by a society that takes in both boys and girls. The boys' club will attract him because it satisfies his natural instinct for the society of those of his kind.

One who has had considerable experience with boys recently said:

“The Endeavour Society movement has, through its great body of enthusiastic young men and women, its admirable organization, fellowship and scope, and its excellent literature, its wide-awake leaders and its popular hold, the best opportunity to attack this problem. If these leaders would be willing to acknowledge that possibly the methods used for young men and the weak imitations of the Sunday-school are not always the best methods to use with boys, and various clubs of boys could be formed under their shelter whose aim should be to grow up later into full-fledged Endeavour Societies, I believe that the Endeavour movement would be strengthened, that a large number of excellent boy leaders would be provided, and that thousands of boys would be held to the church and the Endeavour movement who

are now drifting away for lack of the right touch."

There is no doubt that much of this would take place if the aggressive members of the Endeavour Societies would throw themselves into boys' work.

The Young Men's Christian Association is not reaching the street boy. The Association is too "high-toned" for him, admirable though it may be for the specific work which now engages its attention. "Any young man of good moral character, without regard to religious belief, is eligible to membership," but that does not reach the street boy, liberal as is this qualification. This is not said in criticism of that splendid organization. I am simply mentioning a fact which is generally admitted among its workers. If the Young Men's Christian Association is to reach the street boy it must establish separate branches in the parts of the city where the boy lives, and it must conduct the enterprise very much as the boys' club is conducted, although, needless to say, it will not make the mistake that the average boys' club makes, when it leaves out religion.

It seems to me that instead of the boys' club being an organization from which re-

ligion must be debarred, it really presents one of the finest opportunities for such work.

In one of the churches that I know something about, there was a chaplain in connection with practically every club and society. It seemed the perfectly natural thing to have such an officer in the boys' club because of this fact. The office may be filled by one of the older boys, and at the beginning of the regular meeting he may read a brief portion of scripture, and he might lead the club in repeating the Lord's prayer or some other prayer which may be applicable to the club and its special needs. It is recognized by the boys that the chaplain is a regular officer in the United States army, and this may be made the occasion of the introduction of such an officer into the club. It may seem best, sometimes, to have an adult serve in this capacity. If this is done, and especially if the minister or an experienced worker fills the office, it will give him an opportunity—or an excuse—to give the boys an occasional address on religious matters. This office should be an elective one. If this is so, the boys will have a deeper interest in the services of the incumbent, because he is their own creation. Even a circus recently ap-

pointed a minister as its chaplain. He is to constantly travel with the thousand or more members of the company. Why should not a boys' club have a chaplain, too? Rightly presented, the matter will appeal to every boy in the club.

In some neighbourhoods it may be a good plan to have a mass-meeting for the boys on Sunday afternoons, conducted by the chaplain. Attendance should not be made compulsory, but the meeting may be made so interesting that the boys will want to come. As already stated, the study of Bible characters may be made very interesting to boys, and under the direction of a wise Christian teacher, the members of the club may be led to take a deep interest in the things that have to do with religion. Gathering together a class of boys who are not touched by any other religious organization, it will pay to put into this effort the very best that God has given you.

VIII

THE CLUBS' "ESPRIT DE CORPS"

MONEY is not the chief consideration in making the club a success. There is something which money cannot bring to a club, and yet, without this almost indefinable something, the club will be a failure.

There is a club in New York which spends five thousand dollars a year for its work, and it is doing good work, too. But there is another club in a western city with a membership about twice as large as the New York club, which managed to get along on thirty-six dollars, and the western club accomplished a great deal of good, even though the work attempted was not so elaborate as that of the New York club. The success of the western club was due to its *esprit de corps*. Every boy in the club was thoroughly enthused. He was intensely interested in making that club a success.

One way to arouse this interest is by having the boys pay something for the privileges that they enjoy. It is a mistaken policy to continually offer privileges to any class without

requiring some service or self-help. This of itself is an educative feature that is most valuable. I once had a young men's club which was limited to ten members. They were all employed in factories near the church. The boys wanted a gymnasium. I told them that I would provide them with a room, if they would manufacture some of the material necessary for fitting up the gymnasium, and that I would help them in the matter of purchasing other material, which they could not afford to buy. They soon had a simple outfit, and I had contributed only about ten dollars. The boys appreciated it far more than if it had been given to them outright, and it was a pleasure to see how affectionately they regarded every part of that crude affair. It was their own—purchased at a real sacrifice. The moral and mental discipline acquired through this effort was of more value than any physical training they might have received in a more elaborate gymnasium, and the club meant more to them after that.

In some clubs there is a small initiation fee with regular dues, but these rarely amount to more than one dollar a year, payable monthly or weekly. Most boys can pay a

penny a week, and it is a good plan to have the boys pay it to the treasurer when they respond to the roll-call at each business meeting, the secretary checking the attendance, and the treasurer the amount of the dues paid.

The boys will always be interested in having a name for their club, and it should be chosen by the members themselves, although they may need some help in this matter. Sometimes they will be tempted to name it "The Lily Club," or "The Yellow Kids," or, perhaps, "The Cuban Avengers." The name, however, should mean something to the boys, and should be selected because of the inspiration which comes from it, or because it suggests the object of the club. Following are the names of some successful clubs: "Success Club," "Young Americans," "Loyalty Club," "The Pilgrims," "North Side Boys' Club," "Agassiz Club," "Clean Street Aids."

In addition to a name, some clubs have a motto. Very frequently it is a text of Scripture. "Our God, whom we serve, is able," "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," have been helpful to some boys' clubs. Other clubs have been inspired by the following mottoes: "To do the best

The Clubs' "Esprit de Corps" 77

we can, and to rejoice with those who can do better"; "Progress,"

"Look upward, and not down,
Look forward, and not back,
Look out, and not in,
Lend a hand."

By all means have a club colour. When there are several clubs in connection with the same organization, it is best to have a ground colour, to which each club may add another, which will distinguish it from the other clubs, and yet indicate the relationship. This would be especially applicable to the group clubs which are made up of the members composing a mass club. If, for instance, the ground colour selected is blue, the first club may have red and blue, the second yellow and blue, the third white and blue, and so on.

A boys' club never fails to become enthusiastic when giving the club yell. The words of almost any college yell may be paraphrased for the convenience of the boys, if it seems difficult to secure an original yell. One club has adopted the following yell :

" Boom-a-lacka ! Boom-a-lacka !
Sizz ! Boom ! Bah !
We're the Young Americans !
Rah ! Rah ! Rah !"

Some managers have a genius for composing club songs. Sometimes they are so elaborate that they give the name, the place and time of meeting, the object of the club, the name of the manager and the club's admiration for him, and close with an invitation to attend the meetings. They are usually set to some popular tune, so that the club can master the song in a single evening.

Songs for special occasions may be easily composed by some one connected with the club. In fact, some of the boys will compose quite a good many songs themselves when once the spirit of club singing is aroused.

Button badges, with the initials of the club name upon them, are worn with considerable pride, and arouse much interest among the boys outside the club. Special ribbon badges for the officers of the club are sometimes worn, especially during the meeting.

Membership cards are quite useful. Indeed, they are almost essential. They may be used as admission cards, and should be left with the person who has charge of the games whenever a game is borrowed, so that he may know whom to hold responsible for its return. The card is quite simple, the following design answering all ordinary purposes:

No., 1900
North Side Boys' Club	
Ninth Avenue, N., near Washington	
Name.	
Address.	

The rules of the club may be printed on the back of the card. These should be few and *enforced*. Sometimes probation cards are issued, and if, after a month's trial the boy proves himself worthy, he is admitted to full membership, and given a regular ticket. Whenever there is a variety of tickets, they should always be printed on differently coloured cardboard.

Have public meetings open with a salute to the American flag, the form of salute being somewhat as follows: "I give my heart, my head, my hand, to God, my home, my native land." This may be followed by the club song and the club yell.

If the boy can really be persuaded to give heart, head and hand to God, home, and native land, one could not ask for more, for this is the sum of man's duty. The boys' club is doing much in this direction.

IX

CLUB MANAGERS

A CLUB may have the best appliances to be obtained and an unlimited amount of money with which to push its work, and yet be run into the ground because of the incompetency of its manager. The success of the whole enterprise depends upon the wisdom of the man or the woman who has the work in charge.

Of all kinds of social or religious effort, the personal element enters most largely into boys' club work. It is more attractive to the street boy than an institution or an abstract principle. Many a so-called ignorant mission worker is having larger success with boys than some college graduates, and, probably, is doing them more good, possibly because he or she understands them better. Because one can glibly quote pedantic phrases as to the social conditions of the poor, it does not always follow that one has the best grasp of the situation.

Genuine interest in the boy is taken for granted. It is also assumed that the worker is a Christian—that is, one who has the spirit of Christ. And this spirit will constitute the major part of one's personality, and, hence, one's influence.

It is quite a fad, among a certain class, to take up some form of social, or even religious work, and then to drop it when it is found that it means hard work, or the exercise of brain power. The faddist is not the successful boys' club worker. Neither is the man or the woman with a "mission." There is a seriousness about the work that should engage the best that there is in us, but sometimes the tremendously serious manner in which some people seek to reform others is quite laughable. And the average reformer is rarely a success in boys' club work.

The successful boys' club worker has a store of humour which is always at command. Not that he needs to tell funny stories, but he must see the funny side of what would dishearten the average man. In boys' club work the appreciation of a joke is the beginning of wisdom. This sense of humour is sometimes quite as effective as a policeman's club.

I knew a young lawyer who undertook to manage a room full of boys who were rather inclined to have some fun out of any new man who came down in the capacity of "care-taker." As a rule, boys don't like to be "taken care of." The lawyer had rather a serious face, anyway, and he was very much in earnest. During the evening an amusing incident occurred which raised a laugh in a corner of the room. The care-taker swooped down upon the little group, and administered a rebuke which was worthy of a better cause. In the earnestness of his oration he accidentally struck a boy in the face. Instantly every boy in the room was after him. They threw him down-stairs, and then chased him until he was taken under the care of a policeman. An appreciation of the ridiculous would have saved him, and he might still be working with the boys in that club, doing effective service, because he was really a very good fellow.

It should always be remembered that the influence exerted in the boys' club depends altogether upon the character of the leader. In the schoolroom the teacher is supported by a certain well-recognized authority. The club manager has only tact and force of

character. But if he has these, he is sure of his ground; surer than if he had the backing of the most feared school official.

A successful manager must be a man of a great deal of enthusiasm. He must have sympathy for the boys. He must have patience and yet be firm. He must be absolutely honest, never making a promise that he knows he cannot fulfill, and he must take a personal interest in every member of the club, so far as that is possible. He should visit the boys in their homes, and become acquainted with their home life, thus becoming familiar with the peculiar situation of each boy, and knowing far better just how to deal with him than a hundred meetings in the club-rooms would indicate.

He may have any number of assistants, but he should be present every time the club meets. Furthermore, he should always be on time. There are few things that are more demoralizing in club work than a tardy manager. The assistants should arrange to be present on the same night of each week when they cannot come every night, because, in most cases, they will be likely to meet the same boys, week after week; and it is only in this way that they will have an

opportunity of knowing the boys intimately. It is absolutely necessary that a warm friendship exist between the boy and the manager before the greatest amount of good may be accomplished.

It is a good plan to specialize the work of the attendants, especially when the club is large. Select one man to look after the reading matter, and make him responsible for it in every way. Another might have charge of the games. This task should not become perfunctory, but he should make a study of his work, noting, for instance, the effect of certain games upon the boys, and inventing new games for the boys which will be an improvement upon those which are being used by the club. Still another should be delegated to see that the room is well kept,—lights, pictures, and all furnishings being under his care. One man might keep a record of the attendance of the club members, using a day-book containing the names of all of the boys, and checking them off as they enter the room. In this way the manager will know which boys will need his attention. A complete record book should always be kept by this same man, showing the name, address, age, number, occupation,

pet, and hero of each boy, besides other points of interest.

This may seem like spending a great deal of time in details, but that is what helps make the club successful. The manager should be relieved of as much detail work as is possible, so that he may give all of his time to the individual boys. He may accomplish more by playing a game of dominoes with that new boy than he could by spending the entire evening giving out the games at the desk, although he would probably learn a great deal doing that, if he is a close observer.

The presence of a refined woman who understands boys will usually have a good effect upon the boys, although some of them may be inclined to show off at first. There is no reason why a woman should not take entire charge of the club. In fact, some of the most successful boys' club workers are women.

The club-room attendant should remember that when he shouts or becomes excited he is losing his grip on the boys, because they are not slow in appreciating the weakness of which this is a sign.

More important than *what* is done is the

question as to *who* does it. It may be a boys' club or simply a reading-room. It may be through the evening classes or through a social evening at one's home that the boy will be reached. It may be a Junior Republic or a City History Club, a League for Street Cleaning or an Anti-"Some-thing-or-other" Society. But whatever it is, do not depend upon the method. No one has ever discovered an organization that will universally help boys. A mother of seven boys was asked what her method was, as they had all turned out well. "Bless your soul," she replied, "I have seven methods." If the boys are to be helped, it will be when the worker has made his work a passion—and that will solve almost any problem.

There is an increasing demand for men and women who will make boys' work a life occupation.

Mr. Frank S. Mason, one of the leading club managers in this country, recently said:

"Universities are establishing professorships in child study. Every social settlement recognizes the importance of work for boys. The church and the Young Men's Christian Association are laying out, and offering greater advantages to the boy. All along the

line it is becoming recognized that the boys of to-day are the men of to-morrow.

“These are hopeful signs, and why is it not wise, at this time, to suggest that this position, with its wonderful opportunities for doing good to humanity, shall be adopted by some of the brightest young men of the country, as a profession ?

“There can be no valid objection, except that the means of support are so scanty and inadequate for the conduct of the work, and that the basis of support is on such an insecure footing. Every year, however, adds to the number of clubs that are formed, and extends the life of the majority of those which have been previously organized.

“The average director’s salary is, to-day, larger than that of the average minister, and it is safe to say, without any disparagement to the boys’ club director, that the education demanded for the position is not as great as is that demanded for the ministry. Certainly the work does not demand more from the man, in the way of time or effort, and the spiritual rewards are nearly as great.”

X

SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

ONE of the best ways to win boys is to believe in them. The world does not believe in boys. Most people want to get rid of them. If a window is found broken, our first thought is that some "bad boy" has done it. I do not believe in making a silly thing out of a boy—you would not get very far along even if you tried it—but I do believe in giving him the same chance as a girl.

The standard set for the behaviour of a boy is what a nice, sweet, clean girl will *not* do. The boy may be wrong, but this negative standard does not appeal to him. He is not very sweet or beautiful; at least, the boy's sweetness and beauty are not much spoken of. The average boy knows that his sister sins as much as he does, but in a different way. She is selfish, jealous, covetous, deceitful,—as he is—but the sins of her heart are not so much in evidence as the sins of his mouth. Give the boy a fair show!

Study the tastes and talents of the boy and use them in reaching him. A Sunday-school teacher had a boy in his class who gave him a great deal of trouble. He finally went to the mother of the boy to talk with her about his needs. "Don't talk to me about that boy," she blurted out, as soon as she discovered his mission. "I have trouble enough with him; he is a great trial to me. Just come into the kitchen with me and see what he has done there." The teacher followed the tired mother into the kitchen and there on the walls were drawn pictures of animals and landscapes and people. They were well drawn, and the teacher saw the artist in embryo. He said to the mother: "I thank you for bringing me into the kitchen. You have given me the key to your boy's heart."

Next Sunday he was at his place with a pad of paper and a good soft lead pencil, and he used it in the class. He wanted a map drawn that day, and he asked the boy if he would draw it. He said to him: "I have learned that you can draw. Just make that outline with the water line, then draw these mountains and put in these rivers and mark the towns."

The boy did it; he was a partner in the

concern that day, and it marked the end of all trouble in the class so far as that particular boy was concerned.

There is nothing like getting into the homes of the boys in order to reach them. An incident which occurred during the early part of my career as a Sunday-school teacher has often helped me to bear with an unruly boy. This particular boy had been quite troublesome, and seemed to be demoralizing the entire class. I told the superintendent that he must be taken out of the class. It did not occur to me at the time just where he was to go. I was simply anxious to get rid of him. During the week that followed I called at the boy's home, because I was not altogether satisfied with my own course. I met his mother and sisters, as well as the boy himself, and spent a very pleasant evening, nothing being said about the trouble in the class.

On the next Sunday I went to the superintendent and told him that I had decided to keep the boy. I have never forgotten the look of pleasure and relief which came into his face. Later, when I became a superintendent I understood what that look meant. Soon after the boy came into the class. He had a small package which he handed to me

with some embarrassment. I found that it contained his photograph. I never regretted that I held on to that boy. Shortly afterwards I left the city, but returned about ten years later. One night, after I had been addressing several hundred young mechanics at a technical school, a strapping fellow stepped forward with a smile to tell me that he was formerly my scholar in that old Sunday-school class. He was the boy who had worried me so sorely when I was teaching that group of New York youngsters. He was then in a good position, exerting a splendid influence because of his strong, Christian character.

Another New York boy comes to my mind who was so full of life that somebody got up a petition to have him expelled from the church and the Sunday-school, which he faithfully attended, in spite of his supposed viciousness. It had been impossible to drive him away by hard looks and harsh words. That boy and his "pal" stuck to the religious organizations, not especially to engage in their services, but because there was a preacher there who seemed, somehow, to care for a fellow. However, the boys always happened to find the creaky bench, when there was one, and somehow the gas-pipe in

the outer hall had a peculiar attraction for them while the meeting was going on. Soon, there was no light in the hall, and a little later the people in the church were sitting in darkness. Naturally, they were just a little vexed. On the evenings that the church was closed, and that meant every night except Sunday and the prayer-meeting night, the boy "hung out" with the gang in a milk wagon which stood on the corner across the way. I have often thought that it would have been a good thing if somebody connected with the church had started a boys' club for the group that spent the evening in that milk wagon. It is quite likely that there would have been less mischief all around—both in the church and outside of it.

But that petition—only six signatures were obtained—be it said to the credit of the folks who attended that church, so the boy was permitted to remain. The six people who signed the petition afterwards came into disrepute, and the boy—well, he became a preacher, and some years later he was called to become the pastor of the same church, and one of the first organizations that he started was a boys' club.

Boys may be trusted to a far greater ex-

tent than is generally supposed. Never permit the impression to go out that the caretaker or the manager is a "policeman." A boy will usually turn out to be what you expect him to be. If you put him on his honour he will rarely disappoint you. If you make him feel that you think he needs watching, make up your mind that you will not be able to watch him close enough, for he will surely get the best of you. The average boy will take excellent care of the games that are entrusted to him. The open shelves of the public libraries have been a revelation of the natural honesty of the children.

If once you can enlist the interest of a group of boys, there is no limit to which they will not go. I know of half a dozen young men who worked all night and until seven o'clock the next morning, to prepare the hall for an entertainment of the club, and then went to work in the shops in which they were employed. Needless to say, they spent a good share of the next night at the entertainment. The wisdom of this may be questioned, but it certainly was an evidence of the enthusiasm and the love which these young fellows had for their club.

There should be constant movement in the work of the boys' club. If the enterprise lags, the boys will not wait for it. Watch a crowd of boys following a fire-engine! There is something definite about it. It suggests life, and duty and heroism. You can find few things which more readily appeal to the average boy. The club is doomed if the boys get ahead of it.

Neither should they be permitted to get ahead of the leader. They will sometimes attempt it, but after a good square trial in which you have shown yourself equal to them, they will have the greatest respect and admiration for you.

I heard of a day school teacher who had just come to a certain school. The boys in the class resolved that they would humiliate him. Coming into the room one morning, he found written on the blackboard: "Our teacher is a donkey." He wasn't quite that, and he proved it. Walking to the board, he added the word "driver," and then went on with the lesson, without mentioning the incident. That settled the boys. They felt decidedly sheepish. They never again attempted to be smart with that teacher.

It will pay to respect the boys. If there is

anything in the world that a boy hates it is to be treated like a little boy. He thinks that he is older than he really is. He certainly is older than most people think he is. Never call him "bub." Did you ever notice the look of glad surprise that came into the face of a boy whose name you remembered and used when you met him only the second time? It is worth while to study the names of the boys.

Do not permit the club-rooms to become a mere loafing place, and under no circumstances allow the boys to smoke in or about the building. While in the room, every boy should be interested in a book, paper or game, unless there is some good reason for his lack of employment. A boy should not be allowed to change a game until he has finished playing it. There is a temptation to make frequent trips to the game counter, in order to try all the games in a single evening. This will be done especially by the smaller boys.

Order should be the first law in a boys' club, as well as in heaven. Boys really prefer order. They love "the imperialism of good-natured firmness." If there is disorder, it is usually the fault of the manager. The

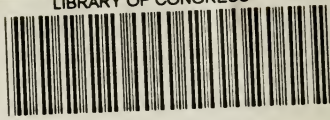
cause of disorder is that the boys have found something more interesting than you have given them.

On a cold or wet night the furnishings of a boys' club are incomplete unless there is a coffee-kettle, coffee and sugar and milk in a cupboard, and a little money with which to buy some cookies or doughnuts. The stormy evenings are the times you can get nearest the boys.

One of the most vivid memories of my boys' club days is connected with the large blackboard which was stationed near the door, where every boy would see it. That blackboard had chalked upon it some helpful mottoes which have gone through life with many an east side boy. Often there were simple rules of conduct "which are observed by every gentleman," we were informed.

I remember that the rules were all positive rules—never a "don't," that I can recall, but always a positive "be." In that rule of the manager there may be found a valuable pointer for the boys' club worker.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 003 660 925 4